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following manner. He put two young pickerel, about five inches long, in a trough with a great quantity of little minnows of about one inch in length; and these two pickerel ate one hundred and twenty-eight minnows the first day; one hundred and thirty-two the second; and one hundred and fifty the third! and *they increased one inch in length in forty-eight hours!* They were mere machines for the assimilation of other organisms!—*Fifth Report of Mass. Commissioners of Inland Fisheries*, 1871.

TICKS IN THE EAR.—I can tell a tale about a tick in *my* ear (see NATURALIST, May, p. 176). In Cuba I was lost in the woods. I slept one night on the ground. A day or two thereafter feeling a curious buzzing in my ear I lay down on the opposite side and filled the ear with water. It was not very long before the tick loosened its hold and was taken out. I know nothing of the species but suppose it was the common horse or cattle tick of that island.—C. WRIGHT.

THE STAR-NOSED MOLE.—In January, 1869, I noticed mole tracks and burrows in the snow in Niles, Michigan, and soon saw the star-nosed mole making similar tracks and burrows. He was apparently as lively as if it had been summer. Is it common for this animal to be abroad thus in the winter?—SANBORN TENNEY.

WHITE SPOTTED MUSKRAT.—I have a muskrat skin that has a narrow white spot upon the back, between two and three inches long; also two patches of white upon the head. There was also white about the mouth.—W. C. FISH.

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GEOLOGY.

DISCOVERY OF MASTODON REMAINS AT MOTT'S CORNERS NEAR ITHACA, N. Y.—A few days ago a son of Mr. J. P. Allen, of Mott's Corners, in digging a ditch to drain a small peat bog, discovered two teeth of Mastodon. With more than ordinary good sense, he immediately stopped digging and the specimens were carried to Cornell University. A party consisting of Mr. Cornell, Pres. White, Dr. Wilder, Prof. Brown, a student and myself visited the spot and made further excavations which furnished only fragments of bones. Since then other parties have secured three more teeth and a considerable quantity of broken bones.

The locality is situated in the deep valley of Six Mile Creek, excavated in Chemung rocks. The bottom of this valley has been filled up with a great thickness of drift, through which the creek has cut here and there down to or into the solid rock. At the mastodon locality the stream met with a little knob of Chemung rocks which appears to have formed at one time an island, but the creek afterward cut its way through the rock to a lower level on the left side and the channel on the opposite side was deserted. Springs, one of which is said to be salt, have kept this deserted channel wet and a bed of peat has formed which once supported some large trees. The layer of peat varies from a few inches to two feet or more and is full of sticks, pine knots, bark, etc., more or less decayed. Beneath this is a layer of variable thickness, rarely more than a few inches, composed of clay mixed with pebbles and pieces of shale. In this were found small fragments of bones and teeth, the former in a very decayed condition showing that the skeleton had been completely broken up and scattered. The whole rests on a bed of blue arenaceous clay with large pebbles and fragments of rock of all kinds, in fact, a modified drift. In most cases the bones were merely scattered over the surface of this bed between it and the peat. The teeth are in very good condition and not at all waterworn. The animal probably became mired near the spot. The skeleton, exposed to the action of the elements, went to pieces, and the fragments were scattered, partly by water action and partly through the agency of wild animals.—Ch. Fred. Hartt, *Cornell University*, *May 25th*, 1871.

The Discovery of a Skull of a Musk-ox in Utah.—The skull referred to in the "Salt Lake Tribune" this morning, is quite different from the skull of a buffalo. The long, heavy, drooping horns mark it as the skull of a musk-ox—an animal now found only within, or near, the arctic regions. It is an exceedingly interesting relic to the geologist as an aid in reading the ancient history of this valley. The skull, which is in a good state of preservation, was imbedded about eight feet below the surface in a layer of coarse, stratified gravel, with layers of sand and finer gravel above and below it.

Much of the work of filling the valley had been accomplished before this relic was deposited, but it found its resting place long before the work was completed, and long before Salt Lake wore water lines in the mountains above the "benches." Musk-oxen and the foot-prints of glaciers left on the quartz rocks of some of these canyons, suggest a former climate quite unlike that which now makes the valley such a fruitful garden.—P. A. CHADBOURNE, May 16, 1871. *From the Salt Lake Tribune.*

FOSSIL WALRUS.— At a meeting of the New York Lyceum of Natural History, held during last autumn, Prof. Newberry, the President, exhibited the anterior portion of the cranium of a walrus which had been found during the summer at Long Branch by a gentleman whose foot struck against it while bathing. It was strongly silicified, but exhibited no appreciable difference from modern specimens. The precise age of this fossil could not, of course, be ascertained, although it is well known that its range was formerly much south of its present habitat. It is not unfrequently brought down on floating ice off the coast of Newfoundland; and although Labrador is at present the southern limit of its residence, it was once very abundant in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and its remains have been found in the shell-heaps of the Bay of Fundy. It is probable that the specimen exhibited by Prof. Newberry is a relic of the glacial period, although it was suggested that it might have been of the tertiary age, which probably cannot be verified. Other specimens of similar character are recorded as having been found on Martha's Vineyard; in Monmouth Co., New Jersey; and in Accomac Co., Virginia.

THE PTERODACTYL IN AMERICA.—Prof. Marsh states in the American Journal of Science and Arts, that the Yale College party obtained in addition to the cretaceous fossils already spoken of, several specimens which indicate a huge flying reptile, which he names *Pterodactylus Owenii.* The bones discovered "indicate an expanse of wings not less than twenty feet." The remains were found by Prof. Marsh in the upper cretaceous formation of Western Kansas. This is the first occurrence of the Pterodactyl in America.

MICROSCOPY.

MONOCHROMATIC ILLUMINATION.—Whenever I want to make out some of the minutest details of any organism, or to get over any difficult test, and I see that my microscope, after all due preparation, and with the best prospect of light, fails to answer my expectation, I refer, as a last resource, to my prism, and get from it a colored sunbeam. Blue or green are the colors which I prefer; they are the most suitable for the purpose.